

Original Research

A Quantitative Comparative Study of Country University Competitiveness as Illustrated by the Countries of the Near East

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Abstract

A comparative study of the university systems of the countries of the Near East has been undertaken in this paper. It has been illustrated that the most competitive systems in terms of World University Rankings are the university systems of Iran, Israel, and Saudi Arabia. This conclusion, at a glance, was made based on the distribution of all the universities of 14 countries of the Near East by the ten World University Rankings. This conclusion was confirmed in a more detailed manner upon entering and calculating three integral indicators of country university competitiveness. They were expressed by multiplying and adding the number of the universities of the countries mentioned in the rankings mentioned above and the average values of the positioning of the universities in these systems. Together with the number of universities distributed among the countries, these three indicators correlated well with each other. The devised methodology of a quantitative assessment of country university competitiveness is proposed for a comparative study of this competitiveness in random groups of countries worldwide.

Keywords: Country University Competitiveness, World University Rankings, University Benchmarking, Middle Eastern Countries, Integral Indicator, Cross-Correlation Matrix, Near East.

Introduction

There is no record of the concept of country university competitiveness in scientific literature, which can be proved by looking up the term. Earlier, the term "regional university competitiveness" was brought in by Moskovkin and Yawei (2018) in their academic paper. In this paper, the methodology of calculating the integral competitiveness indicators will be used

for the country level. As university competitiveness is directly connected to the positioning of universities in the World University Rankings, we shall further regard country university systems from this viewpoint. We shall look at 14 countries of the Near East, including 12 Arabian countries, Israel and Iran, by one of the geographic definitions of these countries and all their universities, which have been included in all the known world rankings. We focused on 10 such rankings except for the Webometrics rankings: THE, ARWU, QS, ScimagoIR, NTU, URAP, CWTS Leiden, US News & World Report, MosiUR, CWUR.

To assess the popularity of topics on university rankings in the countries under consideration, it is enough to test in Advanced Search Google Scholar the country names of universities using "with the exact phrase" and the term "Rankings" using "with at least one of the words". Having tested these terms in combination in all possible variants on 17 June 2021, we got the following results:

Iranian Universities & Rankings – 2,630 responses, Iran Universities & Rankings – 326 (total 2956);

Israeli Universities & Universities – 1860 responses, Israel Universities & Rankings – 337 (total 2197);

Arab Universities & Rankings – 1850, Arabian Universities & Rankings – 797, Arabic Universities & Rankings – 112 (total 2759).

As a result, for all the time, we received publication activity on this topic for the countries under consideration of approximately the same order, but Iran was slightly ahead of Arab Countries in terms of the publication activity under consideration. Among the Arab Countries, as is well known and will follow from our quantitative calculations, Saudi Arabia is the clear leader in the university reputation race. This is also confirmed by the fact that in 2012 this country launched its own World University Ranking called CWUR, which we will use in our research and other World University Rankings. As a very small country, Israel is unable to compete in the publication race (34th place in 2020 in terms of the total number of publications) with Iran and enter a large number of their universities in the World University Rankings. However, they have a high-quality higher education system and do not seem to care much about their poor reputation in the university race and publication race stemming from it. University innovative projects are immediately implemented, and it is common knowledge what a technologically advanced country it is with a rational lifestyle.

Literature Review

According to the Scimago Journal & Country Rank data, Iran achieved the most ambitious result in the publication race in the Scopus publication activities by rising from the 54th in 1996 to the 16th position in 2020. According to the Web of Science database, Iran has the fastest growing research output in the Near East, increasing the number of scientific papers for 30 years (1980 – 2010) by 11 times (Habibzadeh 2011). After a glance at the term "Iranian Universities" on Google Scholar, we discovered that Iran pays tremendous attention to the development of library management in Iranian universities of medical sciences (Alipour-Hafezi, et al., 2019; Hamdipour, 2011; Dastani, Atarodi & Panahi, 2018; Kaffashan Kakhki, Modiramani, Aminpour, Sadeghi-Gourji & Ebrahimzadeh., 2020), as well as e-learning readiness in Iranian universities (Farazkish & Montazer, 2019; Shayganmehr & Montazer, 2020; Darab & Montazer, 2011; Haydari & Montazer, 2020).

It is also worth mentioning that a considerable number of Iranian universities are

positioned in the World University Rankings, and, on the whole, they stand higher than Russian universities. As university competitiveness is closely connected with university rankings, we shall look at only one relevant and recently published paper by Lapushin and Israeli (2020). This paper assesses the ranking and innovative activities of Israeli higher education institutions. If we look at the most recent version of the Webometrics rankings (July 2020), we shall notice 43 Israeli institutions of higher education, many of which have not even been accredited. Only ten universities and large higher education institutions will remain if colleges and centers are excluded. As noted in the paper mentioned above, seven out of ten were included in 2019 in the rankings of ARWU, THE, QS, Webometrics, CWTS Leiden, and U.S. News Best Global Universities with good standings.

Since most of the other Near East countries are Arab (12 countries), we shall extensively review their higher education systems. However, in the beginning, as before for Iran and Israel, we note that the leader in publication activity among Arabian Countries is Saudi Arabia. The Scimago Journal & Country Rank data rose from the 43rd in 1996 to the 24th position in 2020. El Hassan, Abu Arabi & Al-Zoubi (2015) suggest using benchmarking tools for managing Arabian universities. The best management practices of the European TEMPUS and Erasmus projects have been analyzed, in which Arabian universities participate, but with no connection to university rankings. Since such Arab countries as Maghreb (Northern Africa) and Mashriq (Western Asia) have been countries of the Mediterranean Partnership with the European Union for a considerable period, it is natural that cooperation between the Arabian and European universities in the Mediterranean is developing within the framework of this partnership. Thereupon, in the paper of Fazeli-Varzaneh, Ghaderi-Azad & Elango (2021), the weakness of the local cooperation network and the central role of the USA and European countries in the Middle Eastern cooperation network is noted.

All the criteria or ARWU, QS, THE, and Webometrics ranking indicators are minutely studied in the paper of Alsharif (2020). The most significant positions among them, which should serve as guidelines for Arabian universities, have been highlighted to succeed in the rankings. Reference is given to the top five universities of the world and all the Arabian universities to the positions in the rankings. Subsequently, based on the criteria (indicator) studies of the four rankings mentioned above, practical mechanisms (recommendations) to further promote the universities within them, drawing on the example of the universities of Kuwait, were suggested.

Apart from this paper, the mechanisms and strategies of promoting Arabian universities in the World University Rankings have been studied in the papers of Hassan (2006) and Al Sharbini (2016). From the paper by Saqr (2011), we have learned about the reasons for the weak representation of Arabian universities in the World University Rankings, which are as follows: 1. Insufficient academic freedom. 2. Insufficient financial support for higher education and scientific research. 3. Immaturity of Arabian universities. 4. Systemic and cultural reasons connected with the university grading indicators, the prevailing one being the requirement of presenting scientific research results in English. A study of the latter was made by Aziz (2015) in a special paper on this problem, drawing on the example of the University of Cairo.

A similar study, using the example of the universities of Saudi Arabia, was made by Sa'egh (2011), which explained why some Arabian universities had entered the World University Rankings while others had not. The latter is explained by weak scientific research and its focus on philosophy, which has no relevance to applied social and economic sciences, including

higher education management problems. It must be noted that the focus is not only on philosophy but on theology per se.

Bodyaf, Brahmia and Hamouda (2016) have noted that the grading of universities may not reveal their real level and positions in all sciences, as the World University Rankings and their advantages also have significant drawbacks. As illustrated by the universities of Saudi Arabia, the authors have pointed out that the universities, which have close ties with the top universities of the world, succeed the most. Therefore, it must be noted that, according to the data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 53637 out of 85345 Saudi Arabian students studying in the USA (UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2018; Jafar & Knight, 2020). Al Seddiki (2014) explains why some universities of Saudi Arabia have made an unprecedented breakthrough in the World University Rankings, which serves as a goal for the universities of the Arab world. It was noted that it was achieved thanks to the ambitious plans and programs to improve the quality of scientific research and the positioning of Saudi universities in the World University Rankings.

Further, Hamdan (2015) singled out three criteria of university excellence – the quality of scientific research, the standard of graduates, and universities' ability to transfer technologies and keep them within the Arab world. The "Major Challenges Facing Higher Education in the Arab World: Quality Assurance and Reference." monography published in 2019 by Springer is an important study on the competitiveness of Arabian universities. From the point of view of positioning Arabian universities in the World University Rankings, the chapter on university grading indicators is important (Badran & Badran 2019). It describes the ranking methodology of ARWU, THE, and QS, scores of leading universities in the 2017-2018 rankings, and all the Arabian universities, which are at the bottom of the rankings. A detailed description of a new national university ranking system has been drawn up in Jordan (Jordan University Ranking). According to it, tuition is assessed with 250 points, research – 250 points, internationalization – 150 points, standard of university graduates -200 points, academically accredited universities – 150 points. In this case, the scores seem to correspond to the percentage weights in the top world rankings. Their total value is 1000.

A study of the Arab Countries' university systems is frequently addressed within a broader group of countries, such as the Middle Eastern Countries and the North African (MENA) Countries. In the first case, Egypt and Turkey are normally added to the Asian Arab countries with Israel and Iran, which we regard as Middle Eastern Countries, while the Maghreb countries (Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Sudan) join up with the MENA countries. The MENA region comprises 21 countries of the Arab League, Iran, Israel, and Turkey. In some studies, Cyprus and Sudan are included in the Middle Eastern and MENA group. Let us look at some publications on these regions from the countries' research output.

Habibzadeh (2011) notes that despite the unstable social, economic, and political situation in the Middle Eastern countries, the publication of scientific papers in these countries has increased at a pace almost four times faster than in the rest of the world. In another paper, Habibzadeh (2014) showed that the participation of Middle Eastern scholars in the publication race compels them to publish papers that have nothing to do with the scientific requirements of their countries. Part of the limited resources of low-income countries is spent on scientific priorities, which benefit high-income nations. The same thing happens when scholars return from abroad and work on foreign research projects (Habibzadeh, 2014).

In Siddiqi, Stoppani, Anadon & Narayanamurti (2016), 9.8 million publication records

from Web of Science (science and engineering articles from SCI) were studied between 1981 and 2013 in 17 countries of MENA (Arab countries only). In this paper, 3 specific indicators were calculated: Publications per Person, Ratio of Publications with Domestic Corresponding Authors, Research Scientific Advantage (similar to the Relative Specialization Index or the Activity Index). While calculating the latter (RSA), 175 scientific fields of SCI were aggregated in 15 disciplines and were calculated with 5- year intervals. RSA in geological sciences/petroleum engineering, chemistry/chemical engineering and environmental sciences/civil engineering has waned over time, it has modestly increased in some other areas, such as biomedical sciences, computer science / electrical engineering and mechanical/industrial/aeronautical engineering in the MENA region. It has been illustrated that the share of global publications in S & E from MENA has tripled from 0.6 in 1981 to 1.8 in 2013. It was also noted that there has been a maximum increase in publications (by 1%) since 2006. We suppose that by considering Israel, Iran, and Turkey, which had been left out of this paper, the share would have been several times higher. The results also show that international collaborators increasingly drove MENA research activity, and median indigeneity reached 52% in 2013 (about half of the corresponding authors were located in foreign countries). This proves the weak scientific cooperation in the MENA region, which has been previously noted, and a significant dependence of the scientific systems of Arab countries from Western countries.

Akyuz and Correia (2017) tried to assess the superiority of the scientific systems of the Near East countries (Cyprus was included apart from the traditionally acknowledged countries of this region) by identifying champion publications published between 1945 and 2014 quoted more than 1000 times. SCI-Expanded was used to identify such papers on 18 February 2015. 1,187,872 articles were identified, each of which had, at least, one author from Near East institutions (mostly universities). Two hundred thirteen were classified as "champion works", whereas Israel produced 194 champion works, Turkey – 17, Iran – 3, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria – 2 each. The following conclusions were made: most Near East countries seem to obtain their champion works from collaborative networks, whereby over 60% of such articles were coauthored from the USA; all champion works were from SCI and leading in order of merit – physics, medicine, biology, chemistry, mathematics, computer sciences; the leading journals were Science (23 articles), Nature (20), New England Journal of Medicine (14), Lancet (9), Cell (7). This research also confirms the results of Siddiqi et al. (2016) on the frail scientific integration of the countries in this region.

Apart from that, the previously mentioned paper (Fazeli – Varzahan et al., 2021) is an important contributor to our research, in which a bibliometric analysis of publications from ISI Web of Science Core Collection (2009 – 2018) shows that, in general, Iran and Saudi Arabia had the best performance in the Near East countries in the field of engineering. At the same time, the authors of their research failed to come to an important conclusion that the weak positioning of Israel in this scientific field is due to it had moved on to postindustrial development long ago, while, out of 18 engineering subfields, it was at the forefront of two of the most technology-intensive subfields: Cell & Tissue Engineering (first place, RSI = 0.17) and Computer Science, Software Engineering (third place, RSI = 0.16). As for the remaining subfields, its Relative Specialization Index values were negative.

So, the literature analysis has illustrated that, at present, there are no papers on the qualitative assessment of the aggregated positioning of universities in world university rankings at the level of countries, indicative of country university competitiveness. This research aims

to develop a quantitative methodology of country university competitiveness, which the Near East countries shall illustrate. In conjunction with this purpose, there are two research questions to fulfill: 1. to formulate a matrix for distributing the Near East universities among all the major world university rankings to identify the approximate quantitative indicator of the aggregated country university potential, which in simplistic terms describes country university competitiveness; 2. to formulate an integral indicator of country university competitiveness as illustrated by the countries of the Near East.

Materials and Methods

To solve the first problem, we considered 14 countries of the Near East: Bahrain, Jordan, Israel, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Qatar, Kuwait, UAE, Oman, Palestine, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, according to the most popular geographical allocation of these countries, as well as 10 world university rankings: THE, ARWU, QS, ScimagoIR (SIR), NTU, URAP, CWTS Leiden, US News & World Report, MosIUR, CWUR. We took the most recent ratings at the time of writing, which corresponded to 2020 and 2020-2021.

Thus, a matrix of dimensions (N_{ij}) is constructed, where N_{ij} is the number of universities in the i -th country included in the j -th rating, $1 \leq i \leq n$, $1 \leq j \leq m$, $n = 14$ is the number of countries, $m = 10$ - the number of ratings. We will consider it as the first analytical tool for benchmarking university competitiveness in the countries of the Near East.

The second task is more complex and requires special explanations and a special methodology. It is well known that their global university rankings determine the competitiveness of universities, so if we want to determine country university competitiveness, we must aggregate all the universities in the country that have global university rankings and build some integral indicator based on this. As noted in the Introduction, the term "Country University Competitiveness" (including its Russian-language name) is not used in scientific literature, which can be seen when tested in an advanced search in Google Scholar. Such an integral indicator can be constructed in various ways. For example, if we define a representative list of world university rankings and establish their weight coefficients, such an integral indicator for the i -th country can have one of the standard types

$$I_i = \sum_{j=1}^m \gamma_j \left(\frac{N_{ij}}{\max \{N_{ij}\}} \right) \quad (1)$$

where γ_j is the weight coefficient for the j -th rating, N_{ij} is the number of universities in the i -th country included in the j -th rating, $\max \{N_{ij}\}$ is the maximum total number of universities in the given rankings in the entire sample of countries, m is the number of ratings.

However, the problem now is that there is no consensus on establishing a list of such ratings and determining their significance since they are still in the development stage. Some countries have defined such lists for themselves; for example, in Russia, ARWU, QS, and THE ratings. But even if such a consensus is established globally, the problem arises of different lengths of these rating lists. For example, ARWU (China) ranks 1,000 universities, CWUR (Saudi Arabia) 2,000, URAP (Turkey) 2,500, and Webometrics (Spain) about 25,000. all ratings up to the minimum length of one of the rating lists. In the absence of knowledge about the significance of the ratings, one can take the same weight coefficients for them. One way to bring all rating lists to the same size is to cut the length of the lists of all ratings to the minimum length of one of the rating lists. Due to the lack of knowledge about the significance of the ratings, one can

take the same weight coefficients for them.

But we have developed a more transparent approach to determining the integral indicator of country university competitiveness, considering the number of universities included in a particular rating and their average positioning in this rating. We tested this approach at the Russian regional level when considering two national rankings and Webometrics Ranking. Consider it below at the country level.

As in formula (1), we will standardize the total number of universities in all ratings for each country by the maximum total value $\frac{N_i}{\max\{N_i\}}$, $N_i = \sum_{j=1}^m N_{ij}$

For each country, we will calculate the average positioning of universities across all rankings. It is defined as the arithmetic mean value of all university ratings, which we will also standardize to the maximum value in the selected countries. Since the ranking of the university when constructing the integral indicator is a de-stimulator, that is, the rating of the university

decreases with the increase of its ranking, we will use the mathematical complex $1 - \frac{\bar{R}_i}{\max\{\bar{R}_i\}}$, $1 - \frac{\bar{R}_i}{\max\{\bar{R}_i\}}$, in which \bar{R}_i - is the averaged ranking for all universities in the i-th country, determined by the formula

$$\bar{R}_i = \frac{\sum_{k=1}^{N_i} R_{ik}}{N_i} \tag{2}$$

Where R_{ik} is a ranking of the k-th university on the aggregate ratings of the i-th country.

Based on two mathematical complexes $\frac{N_i}{\max\{N_i\}}$ and $1 - \frac{\bar{R}_i}{\max\{\bar{R}_i\}}$, we will compose the integral indicator in three possible ways:

$$I_{1i} = \frac{N_i}{\max\{N_i\}} \left(1 - \frac{\bar{R}_i}{\max\{\bar{R}_i\}} \right) \tag{3}$$

$$I_{2i} = \sqrt{\frac{N_i}{\max\{N_i\}} \left(1 - \frac{\bar{R}_i}{\max\{\bar{R}_i\}} \right)} \tag{4}$$

$$I_{3i} = \frac{N_i}{\max\{N_i\}} + \left(1 - \frac{\bar{R}_i}{\max\{\bar{R}_i\}} \right) \tag{5}$$

The first two integral indicators are constructed in a multiplicative way, the second one is constructed according to the geometric mean principle, and the third one is constructed in an additive way. We tested this methodology for the simplest case when the calculations were done only for the SIR rating, which included the largest number of universities in the countries under consideration and at least one of the universities of any country. This methodology will be referred to as the second analytical tool for benchmarking the university competitiveness of countries.

When our article had already been written, we found out that Kalhor and Mehrparvar (2020) proposed an alternative methodology for calculating the integral indicator of country university

competitiveness, which they determined by the formula:

$$W_i = \sum_{i=1}^n (M - R_i + 1) \quad (6)$$

where the W is the weight of the country, n is the total number of universities number of each country, M is the total number of universities number in the world's list and Ri is the ranking of each university in the Webometrics Ranking (Kalhor & Mehrparvar, 2020), which is similar to our methodology. In our study, this methodology will be applied to the SIR rating.

Results

The selected 10 world university rankings, covering almost all traditional rankings based on statistical data and surveys (surveys), belong to the following countries: THE and QS (UK), ARWU (China), SIR (Spain), NTU (Taiwan), URAP (Turkey), CWTS Leiden (Netherlands), US News & World Report (USA), MosiUR (Russia), CWUR (Saudi Arabia). The rankings of all 771 universities in the countries under consideration are given in the Appendix. The number of universities for each country in these rankings is shown in Table 1, which is, as noted in the previous section, a 14x10 matrix. As you can see, this matrix is quite sparse; 48 of its 140 elements are equal to zero. That is, the matrix sparseness coefficient is $(48/140) \times 100\% = 34.3\%$.

Table 1

Number of universities in the 10 world university rankings of the Near East Countries

	Country	THE2020-2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021	Total number
1	Bahrain	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	6
2	Jordan	5	0	4	12	0	4	2	2	3	2	34
3	Israel	7	7	6	14	7	8	7	7	6	9	78
4	Iraq	3	0	2	21	0	3	0	0	1	0	30
5	Iran	47	12	5	139	12	45	36	36	22	38	392
6	Yemen	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
7	Qatar	1	1	1	4	0	2	1	1	1	2	14
8	Kuwait	1	0	3	3	0	1	1	1	1	0	11
9	UAE	5	0	8	10	0	5	2	4	5	3	42
10	Oman	1	0	1	2	0	2	1	1	1	0	9
11	Palestine	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
12	Syria	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
13	Saudi Arabia	10	4	10	29	4	22	4	11	10	8	112
14	Lebanon	4	1	8	9	1	4	1	2	5	2	37
	TOTAL	84	25	50	250	24	98	55	65	56	64	771

Iran shows the highest number of universities in this matrix (392 universities are found in 10 rankings, with the maximum number (139) in the SIR ranking). Saudi Arabia and Israel show the second and third results, respectively. As a first approximation, this indicator represents the country university competitiveness of the countries under consideration. Now we calculate the values of the integral indicators (3 - 5) of the country university competitiveness

based on the entry of the Near East universities into the SIR ranking. The calculations are presented in Table 2. Here $\max \{N_i\} = 139$, $\max \{R_i\} = 860$. For all three values of integral indicators, the first three countries are Iran, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, which also had standings while calculating according to the first analytical instrument.

Table 2

Integrated indicators of country university competitiveness for the Near East countries, calculated according to the SIR rating

	Countries	Number of Universities, N_i	Average rating, R_i	I_{1i}	I_{2i}	I_{3i}	W_i
1	Bahrain	2	769	0.0007	0.0257	0.0603	248
2	Jordan	12	776.58	0.0032	0.0561	0.1228	1397
3	Israel	14	586.21	0.0275	0.1657	0.3734	4295
4	Iraq	21	784.05	0.0041	0.0641	0.1783	2288
5	Iran	139	757.68	0.0599	0.2448	1.0600	18809
6	Yemen	2	776	0.0005	0.0231	0.0516	234
7	Qatar	4	653	0.0055	0.0739	0.2186	960
8	Kuwait	3	787.33	0.0005	0.0224	0.0447	317
9	UAE	10	760.40	0.0041	0.0638	0.1285	1326
10	Oman	2	698	0.0019	0.0439	0.1484	390
11	Palestine	2	770	0.0006	0.0254	0.0591	246
12	Syria	1	806	0.0000	0.0000	0.0072	87
13	Saudi Arabia	29	703.38	0.0266	0.1630	0.3360	5499
14	Lebanon	9	740.22	0.0053	0.0727	0.1464	1375

At present, we can do the calculations using the formula (6). The maximum SIR Rank was 892. This value is the maximum indicator (M) for determining W_i for each country. Note that the SIR is not quite correctly structured, out of 3897 universities, the worst ranking for their site is 892. The research methodology (Kalhor & Mehrparvar 2020) suggests that if we have 3897 universities, then their rankings should vary from 1 to 3897 since this is the case in the Webometrics Ranking. But for relative calculations of W_i , we can use the formula (6) where $M = 892$. The calculations based on this formula are shown in Table 2. They confirm our calculations using the previous formulas, highlighting the same three countries (Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel) as leaders. In conclusion, we will calculate the cross-correlation matrix for indicators $N_i, I_{1i}, I_{2i}, I_{3i}, W_i$ (Table 3). As we can see, all Pearson pair correlation coefficients have high values.

Table 3

Cross-correlation matrix for indicators N_i , I_{1i} , I_{2i} , I_{3i}

	N_i	I_{1i}	I_{2i}	I_{3i}	W_i
N_i	1	0.912121	0.81595	0.959369	0.987386
I_{1i}	0.912121	1	0.962217	0.971746	0.965518
I_{2i}	0.81595	0.962217	1	0.924192	0.889785
I_{3i}	0.959369	0.971746	0.924192	1	0.98461
W_i	0.987386	0.965518	0.889785	0.98461	1

Discussion

The 14x10 matrix shown in Table 1 presents the distribution of the number of universities in 14 countries of the Near East in 10 world university rankings. As a first approximation, this indicator characterizes the university potential of countries, and its global university competitiveness since universities included in the World University Rankings are considered. According to this table, Iran is leading by a wide margin, followed by Saudi Arabia and Israel. As we know from the Introduction, Israel has a small number of prestigious universities and institutions of higher education, but the large total number of them in Table 1 suggests that most of the same higher education institutions are included in all world university rankings.

We believe that it is advisable to build such matrices on an annual basis, tracking down the total university potential in dynamics and, consequently, the university competitiveness of the Near East countries as well. Such a matrix can serve as analytical tools for benchmarking the university competitiveness of Near Eastern countries. The second, more subtle analytical tool (formulas 3 -5) made it possible to quantify the country university competitiveness of the countries under consideration not only based on the total number of universities in the country, as it has been done in the first analytical tool (Table 1), but also based on the average position of all universities in the country in one selected rating, which includes the maximum number of universities (in our case, this is the SIR rating). As in the calculation for the first analytical instrument, the above three countries are also in the lead here. We believe that both analytical tools can serve as the basis for benchmarking the country university competitiveness of arbitrary countries, including the countries of the Near East.

Conclusion

Overall, this paper reviews the university systems' competitiveness of Near East countries has been carried out. Through experiments with Google Scholar, the popularity of the ranking topic for Iran, Israel, and Arabian universities was revealed for all spellings of these countries. The responses received for the terms tested were of approximately the same order under the leadership of Iran. Also presented are the transitions of the three leading Near East Countries according to the Scimago Journal & Country Rank data by Scopus publications (indicator "Documents") from 1996 to 2020. It is shown that significant progress has been made here by Iran and Saudi Arabia, and Israel has significantly worsened its position according to this indicator.

The methodology for assessing country university competitiveness has been developed, which involves constructing a matrix for the distribution of universities by country and World University Rankings, and a quantitative calculation of integral indicators of country university competitiveness. These two analytical tools are proposed to be called benchmarking. The first

tool was tested on the example of 14 countries of the Near East and 10 world university rankings, and the second one - for the Spanish SIR ranking. In the first case, 771 universities of the considered region were involved in the calculations, in the second one - 250.

Calculations of integral indicators of country university competitiveness revealed the top three countries - Iran, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, which is confirmed by our qualitative analysis carried out based on the review of literature in the Introduction. We believe that the proposed methodology for quantifying country university competitiveness can be successfully applied to any regional groupings of countries. Additionally, using the example of SIR Ranking and the countries under consideration, we tested the methodology of Iranian scientists Kalhor and Mehrparvar (2020), which showed consistent results with calculations using our two analytical tools.

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Appendix

Positioning of the Middle East Universities in 10 World University Rankings

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020- 2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020- 2021
Bahrain	Arabian Gulf University	-	-	-	744	-	-	-	-	-	
	Applied Science University of Bahrain	-	-	651-700	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Bahrain	-	-	801-1000	794	-	2317	-	-	1401- 1500	
Total		0	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	0
Jordan	University of Jordan	801-1000	-	601-650	710	-	1106	1013	#971	1001- 1100	1432
	Jordan university of Science and Technology	401-500	-	651-700	711	-	362	990	#520	801-900	1329
	Applied Science Private University	-	-	-	735	-	-	-	-	-	
	German Jordanian University	-	-	801-1000	760	-	-	-	-	-	
	Princess Sumaya University of Technology	-	-	801-1000	785	-	-	-	-	-	
	Al- Balqa Applied University	601-800	-	-	787	-	2233	-	-	-	
	Yarmouk University	1000+	-	-	796	-	-	-	-	1401- 1500	
	University Mutah	-	-	-	798	-	-	-	-	-	
	Al-Zaytoonah Private University of Jordan	-	-	-	798	-	-	-	-	-	
	Al-al Bayt University	-	-	-	802	-	-	-	-	-	
	Hashemite University	1001+	-	-	802	-	2108	-	-	-	
Al-Hussein Bin Talal University	-	-	-	835	-	-	-	-	-		
Total		5	0	4	12	0	4	2	2	3	2
Israel	Tel Aviv University	=191	151- 200	=230	219	136	132	80	#172	451-500	152
	Weizmann Institute of Science	-	93	-	268	215	-	507	#105	-	61
	Hebrew University of Jerusalem	201-250	101- 150	=177	343	246	207	200	#222	134	65
	Technion- Israel Institute of Technology	401-500	101- 150	=291	376	303	316	230	#264	128	158
	Ben-Gurion university of	-	401- 500	=446	493	501- 550	387	292	#580	451-500	349

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	Negev										
	Bar-Ilan University	501-600	401-500	551-560	521	651-700	568	520	#684	801-900	508
	University of Haifa	601-800	601-700	701-750	673	751-800	661	605	#684	1101-1200	646
	Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya	601-800	-	-	697	-	-	-	-	-	1823
	Ariel University	1001+	-	-	740	-	1439	-	-	-	1640
	Open University of Israel	-	-	-	749	-	2386	-	-	-	
	ORT Braude College	-	-	-	749	-					
	Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo	-	-	-	767	-	-	-	-	-	
	Holon Institute of Technology	-	-	-	803	-	-	-	-	-	
	Ruppin Academic Center	-	-	-	809	-	-	-	-	-	
Total		7	7	6	14	7	8	7	7	6	9
Iraq	University of Baghdad	1001+	-	801-1000	744	1301-1400	1784	-	-	1301-1400	
	University of Technology	1000+	-	-	745	-	2125	-	-	-	
	University of Anbar	-	-	-	727	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Mosul	-	-	-	741	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Sulaimani	-	-	-	742	-	-	-	-	-	
	Tikrit University	-	-	-	742	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Basrah	1001+	-	-	775	-	2476	-	-	-	
	Diyala University	-	-	-	775	-	-	-	-	-	
	Al-Mustansiriya University	-	-	-	780	-	-	-	-	-	
	Salahaddin University - Erbil	-	-	-	780	-	-	-	-	-	
	Al-Nahrain University	-	-	-	794	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Babylon	-	-	-	794	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Karbala	-	-	-	797	-	-	-	-	-	
	Al-Furat -Al-Awsat Technical University	-	-	-	801	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Thi-Qar	-	-	-	804	-	-	-	-	-	
Middle Technical University	-	-	-	811	-	-	-	-	-		

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	University of Human Development	-	-	-	814	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Al-Qadisiya	-	-	-	815	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Wasit	-	-	-	822	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Kufa	-	-	801-1000	826	-	-	-	-	-	
	Al-Qasim Green University	-	-	-	836	-	-	-	-	-	
Total		3	0	2	21	0	3	0	0	1	0
Iran											
	Tehran University of Medical Sciences	501-600	501-600	-	428	427	413	280	#623	801-900	629
	University of Tehran	501-600	301-400	591-600	508	364	267	140	#387	551-600	543
	Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences	601-800	701-800	-	-	-	711	526	#959	901-1000	965
	Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences and Health Services	-	-	-	593	701-750	-	-	-	-	
	Mashhad University of Medical Sciences	501-600	-	-	604	701-750	955	751	#792	1001-1100	1305
	Tabriz University of Medical Sciences	601-800	-	-	610	751-800	1045	672	#1,209	-	1533
	TarbiatModares University	-	501-600	-	618	601-650	526	345	#817	601-650	799
	Amirkabir University of Technology	501-600	501-600	=477	641	651-700	476	268	#670	901-1000	759
	Sharif University of Technology	401-500	501-600	=409	649	601-650	537	369	#646	451-500	608
	Shiraz University of Medical Sciences	1001+	-	-	655	-	1210	780	#1,308	-	1472
	University of Science and Culture	-	-	-	660	-	-	-	-	-	
	Imam Hossein University	-	-	-	663	-	-	-	-	-	
	Isfahan University of Medical Sciences	801-1000	-	-	665	-	1186	880	#1,140	-	1319

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	Isfahan University of Technology	601-800	901-1000	-	671	601-650	588	387	#631	801-900	707
	Iran University of Medical Sciences	501-600	-	-	672	-	942	902	#987	501-550	1374
	BabolNoshirvani University of Technology	351-400	-	-	683	-	925	1010	#639	-	1383
	Iran University of Science and Technology	501-600	901-1000	601-650	695	751-800	620	386	#904	1001-1100	887
	Islamic Azad University	-	-	-	697	-	-	-	#445	1001-1100	395
	University of Tabriz	601-800	801-900	-	699	751-800	671	518	#831	1401-1500	992
	Shiraz University	801-1000	701-800	801-1000	702	751-800	694	480	#874	1301-1400	949
	Shahrekord University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	703	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Ferdowsi University of Mashhad	1000+	801-900	-	704	---	681	458	#941	1001-1100	986
	Islamic Azad University	-	-	-	708	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Baqiyatallah Medical Sciences University	-	-	-	710	-	1446	-	#1,329	-	1937
	Alborz University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	711	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Kerman University of Medical Sciences	801-1000	-	-	-	-	1680	-	-	-	-
	Yasouj University	601-800	-	-	718	-	1344	-	#1,405	-	-
	Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	720	-	1668	-	-	-	-
	Shahid Beheshti University	601-800	-	-	724	-	-	598	#999	651-700	1106
	Zanjan University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	727	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Bushehr University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	730	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Kashan University of Medical Sciences and	-	-	-	730	-	-	-	-	-	-

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	Health Services										
	Medical University of Kerman	-	-	-	731	-	-	-	-	-	
	Imam Khomeini International University	-	-	-	733	-	1596	-	Unranked	-	
	Lorestan University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	734	-		-	-	-	
	Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	737	-	1514	-	#1,352	-	1903
	Shahid Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	738	-	-	-	-	-	
	Guilan University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	740	-	-	-	-	-	
	Urmia University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	740	-	-	-	-	-	
	Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	741	-	1548	-	Unranked	-	1934
	Shahed University	1001+	-	-	741		2129	-	-	-	
	North Khorasan University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	742	-	-	-	-	-	
	Gorgan University of Agriculture and Natural Resources	-	-	-	743	-	-	-	-	-	
	Ardabil University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	745	-	-	-	-	-	
	Ilam University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	746	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Kashan	501-600	-	-	750	-	791		#1,174	-	1609
	Qom University	-	-	-	750	-		-	-	-	
	Payame Noor University	-	-	-	752	-		944	-	-	1723
	Kurdistan	301-350	-	-	753	-	1990	-	-	-	

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	University of Medical Sciences										
	Aja University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	754	-	-	-	-	-	
	Urmia University	1001+	-	-	757	-	1364	986	Unranked	1401-1500	1731
	Razi University	1001+	-	-	758	-	1191	920	#1,390		1465
	Institute for Advanced Studies in Basic Sciences	-	-	-	758	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University, Qaemshahr	-	-	-	758	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University	-	-	-	759	-	-	-	-	-	
	Zabol University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	759	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Guilan	1001+	901-1000	-	760	-	1047	774	#1,321	-	1503
	University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Sciences	-	-	-	760	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Isfahan	1000+	-	-	760		1062	756	#1,418	1201-1300	1378
	Birjand University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	761	-	-	-	-	-	
	Yasuj University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	761	-	-	-	-	-	
	Bu-Ali Sina University	1001+	-	-	763	-	1179	921	-	-	1544
	University of Kurdistan, Sanandaj	601-800	-	-	763	-	-	-	-	-	1967
	Hamadan University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	763	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University of Lahijan	-	-	-	764	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University, Pharmaceutical Sciences Branch	-	-	-	764	-	-	-	-	-	
	Kharazmi University	1001+	-	-	765	-	-	-	-	1401-1500	
	Islamic Azad University,	-	-	-	765	-	-	-	-	-	

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020- 2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020- 2021
	Tabriz										
	Rafsanjan University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	765	-	-	-	-	-	
	Zanjan University	-	-	-	766	-	-	1117	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University, Najafabad Branch	-	-	-	766	-	-	-	-	-	
	Ilam University	-	-	-	766	-	-	-	-	-	
	Shahid Chamran University	-	-	-	767	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Bonab	-	-	-	768	-	-	-	-	-	
	Fasa University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	770	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University,Sha hrekord Branch	-	-	-	773	-	-	-	-	-	
	Qazvin University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	773	-	-	-	-	-	
	Lorestan University	1000+	-	-	776	-	-	-	-	-	
	Arak University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	776	-	-	-	-	-	
	Alzahra University	1000+	-	-	777	-	1913	-	-	1201- 1300	
	K.N.Toosi University of Technology	801-1000	-	-	777	-	954	700	#1,288	1201- 1300	1224
	University of Maragheh		-	-	778	-	-	-	-	-	
	Zahedan University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	779	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of MohaghehAr dabili	601-800	-	-	779	-	1517	-	-	-	
	Babol University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	780	-	-	-	-	-	
	Shahroud University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	780	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University Sari Branch	-	-	-	780	-	-	-	-	-	

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	University of Mazandaran	1000+	-	-	780	-	1348	1067	-	-	1755
	Semnan University	1001+	-	-	781	-	1130	887	#1,294	-	1552
	Qom University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	781	-	-	-	-	-	
	Sabzevar University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	784	-	-	-	-	-	
	Sahand University of Technology	-	-	-	785	-	1425	1108	#1,423	-	
	Yazd University	1001+	-	-	788	-	1540	1146	#1,238		1715
	Gonabad University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	788	-	-	-	-	-	
	Hakim Sabzevari University	1001+	-	-	789	-	-	-	-	-	
	Shahrekord University	1001+			789		1671	-	-	-	
	TorbatHeydarih University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	790	-	-	-	-	-	
	Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman	1001+	-	-	790	-	1269	904	#1,459	1401-1500	1573
	Azarbaijan University of TarbiatMoallem		-	-	791	-	-	-	-	-	
	Azarbaijan Shahid Madani University	801-1000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University,Rasht	-	-	-	792	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University of Mashhad	-	-	-	793	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University,Sanandaj	-	-	-	793	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University of Ardabil Branch	-	-	-	794	-	-	-	-	-	
	Shiraz University of Technology	601-800	-	-	797	-	1733	-	Unranked	1201-1300	1956
	Petroleum University of Technology	-	-	-	798	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad	-	-	-	798	-	-	-	-	-	

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	University, Karaj										
	Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht	-	-	-	801	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University of Arak	-	-	-	801	-	-	-	-	-	
	Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	804	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran branch	-	-	-	804	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University, Shiraz	-	-	-	805	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Bojnord	-	-	-	805	-	-	-	-	-	
	Mazandaran University of Sciences and Technology	-	-	-	806	-	-	-	-	-	
	Persian Gulf University	-	-	-	806		2304	-	-	-	
	University of Birjand	1001+	-	-	809	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University, Qazvin	-	-	-	810	-	-	-	-	-	
	Semnan University of Medical Sciences	-	-	-	811	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Zabol	-	-	-	812	-	-	-	-	-	
	Urmia University of Technology	-	-	-	813	-	-	-	-	-	
	Shahid Rajaee Teacher training University	1001+	-	-	813	-	2177	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University of Kermanshah	-	-	-	813	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Shahrood	-	-	-	-	-	-	1089	-	-	
	Shahrood University of Technology	1001+	-	-	813	-	1628		Unranked	-	1985
	Islamic Azad University - Isfahan Khorasgan Branch	-	-	-	814	-	-	-	-	-	
	Maragheh University of Medical	-	-	-	815	-	-	-	-	-	

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	Sciences										
	Damghan University	-	-	-	815	-	-	-	-	-	
	Vali-e-Asr University	-	-	-	816	-	-	-	-	-	
	Arak University	-	-	-	816	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University,Shahr-e-Ray	-	-	-	817	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University - North Tehran Branch	-	-	-	817	-	-	-	-	-	
	Golestan University	-	-	-	817	-	-	-	-	-	
	AllamehTabatabai University	-	-	-	819	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University, Urmia	-	-	-	820	-	-	-	-	-	
	Hamedan University of Technology	-	-	-	821	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Sistan and Baluchestan	1001+	-	-	822	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University,South Tehran branch	-	-	-	824	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University, Hamedan	-	-	-	826	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University,Ahvaz Branch	-	-	-	827	-	-	-	-	-	
	Kermanshah University of Technology	-	-	-	829	-	-	-	-	-	
	Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz	1001+	-	-	-	-	-	1126	-	-	1980
	Malek-Ashtar University of Technology	-	-	-	830			1055	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University East Tehran Branch	-	-	-	837	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Hormozgan	-	-	-	847	-	-	-	-	-	
	Islamic Azad University Science and Research Tehran							610			
Total		47	12	5	139	12	45	36	36	22	38
Yemen	Sanaa	-	-	-	761		-	-	-	-	

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	University Taiz University	-	-	-	791		-	-	-	-	
Total		0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Qatar	Weill, Cornell Medical College in Qatar	-	-	-	586		-	-	-	-	
	University of Qatar	301-350	601-700	245	629		649	833	#607	901-1000	1017
	Texas A&M University of Qatar	-	-	-	686		877	-	-	-	
	Hamad Bin Khalifa University	-	-	-	711		-	-	-	-	1935
Total		1	1	1	4	0	2	1	1	1	2
Kuwait	Kuwait University	1001+		801-1000	717		1097	1057	#1,016	1401-1500	1256
	Gulf University for Science and Technology	-	-	801-1000	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	College of Technological Studies	-	-	-	821	-	-	-	-	-	
	American University of the Middle East	-	-	801-1000	824	-	-	-	-	-	
Total		1	0	3	3	0	1	1	1	1	1
UAE	Khalifa University of Science and Technology	351-400	-	=211	606	---	700	809	#672	1101-1200	987
	United Arab Emirates University	301-350	-	284	659	-	957	1083	#763	401-450	1235
	New York University Abu Dhabi	-	-	-	687	-	-	-	-	-	
	University of Sharjah	601-800	-	601-650	780	-	1576	-	Unranked	1001-1100	1813
	American University in Dubai	-	-	601-650	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	American University of Sharjah	801-1000	-	=348	793	-	1791	-	Unranked	1201-1300	
	Al Ain University	-	-	-	808	-	-	-	-	-	
	Zayed University	801-1000	-	701-750	809	-	2406	-	-	1201-1300	
	Ajman university	-	-	701-750	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	American University of Ras Al Khaimah	-	-	-	810	-	-	-	-	-	
Abu Dhabi University	-	-	701-750	816	-	-	-	-	-		

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	Higher Colleges of Technology	-	-	-	836	-	-	-	-	-	
Total		5	0	8	10	0	5	2	4	5	3
Oman	University of Nizwa	-	-	-	669	-	2356	-	-	-	
	Sultan Qaboos University	801-1000	-	=375	727		1031	1111	#885	701-800	
Total		1	0	1	2	0	2	1	1	1	0
Palestine	An-Najah National University	-	-	-	737		-	-	-	-	
	Birzeit University		-	-	803		1652	-	-	-	
Total		0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Syria	Damascus University	-	-	-	806		-	-	-	-	
Total		0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saudi Arabia	King Abdullah University of Science and Technology	-	201-300	-	234	264	301	427	#121	601-650	326
	King Abdulaziz University	201-250	101-150	143	287	133	89	232	#42	601-650	305
	King Saud University	501-600	151-200	=287	371	289	174	146	#312	451-500	382
	King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals	501-600	401-500	186	572	601-650	590	521	#536	901-1000	709
	Alfaisal University	251-300	-	-	669		1530	-	Unranked	1301-1400	1774
	King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences	801-1000	-	-	702	-	1454	-	#1,156	701-800	1452
	Tabuk University	-	-	-	717	-	1491	-	-	-	
	Umm Al-Qura University	1001+	-	=474	720	-	1461	-	#1,491	1001-1100	
	Taibah University	-	-	-	721	-	1233		#1,221		1864
	Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University	-	-	-	739	-	1739	-	-	-	
	Majmaah University	-	-	-	740	-	2224	-	-	-	
	King Faisal University	1001+	-	801-1000	742	-	2228	-	-	1101-1200	
	Najran University	-	-		742	-	1897	-	-	-	
	Islamic University in Madinah	-	-	801-1000	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Prince Sultan University	-	-	-	747		-	-	-	-		
Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal	801-1000	-	521-530	751	-	1493	-	#1,396	901-1000		

Country	University	THE2021	ARWU 2020	QS 2020-2021	ScimagoIR 2020	NTU 2020	URAP 2020	CWTS Leiden 2020	US News & World Report 2020	MosIUR 2020	CWUR 2020-2021
	University										
	King Khalid University	501-600	-	601-650	759	-	1700	-	#1,285	1101-1200	1966
	Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University	-	-	751-800	763	-	-	-	-	-	
	Jazan University	-	-	-	763		1861	-	-	-	
	Shaqra University	-	-	-	763		-	-	-	-	
	Qassim University	1001+	-	-	773		2421	-	-	-	
	Effat University	-	-	-	774		-	-	-	-	
	Taif University	-	-	-	775		1529	-	#1,476	-	
	Princess Nora bint Abdul Rahman University	-	-	801-1000	784		-	-	-	-	
	University of Jeddah	-	-		785		2135	-	-	-	
	University of Hail	-	-	-	785		1900	-	-	-	
	Albaha University	-	-	-	788			-	-	-	
	Aljouf University	-	-	-	802		2458	-	-	-	
	Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University	-	-	-	807		2056	-	-	-	
	Northern Border University	-	-	-	823		-	-	-	-	
Total		10	4	10	29	4	22	4	11	10	8
	American University of Beirut	301-350	601-700	=220	647	651-700	735	742	#490	177	713
	Universite Saint Esprit de Kaslik	-	-	601-650	667	-	-	-	-	-	
	Lebanese University	1001+	-	701-750	731	-	1458	-	#1,410	-	1957
	Balamand University	-	-	501-510	736	-	2088	-	-	1301-1400	
	Universite Saint-Joseph	801-1000	-	541-550	745	-	-	-	-	1301-1400	
	Beirut Arab University		-	801-1000	767	-		-	-	-	
	Lebanese American University	801-1000	-	551-560	777	-	1918	-	-	601-650	
	Lebanese International University	-	-	-	789	-	-	-	-	-	
	Notre Dame University	-	-	701-750	803	-	-	-	-	351-400	
Total		4	1	8	9	1	4	1	2	5	2